United Nations A/60/98/Add.1

General Assembly

Distr.: General
29 September 2005
English
Original: Arabic/Spanish

Sixtieth session
Agenda item 97 (h)
General and complete disarmament: promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation

Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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II. Replies received from Governments

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[23 September 2005]

For the third consecutive year and by an increased majority the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, adopted the resolution entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation".

Promoted and presented by the member countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, this resolution relates to a matter of great urgency and importance by reaffirming multilateralism and solutions that are reached multilaterally, in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations, as the only sustainable way of dealing with the issues of disarmament and international security.

The Charter of the United Nations clearly states that the Organization has been established in order "to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace".

This was the basis of multilateralism as a means of resolving international problems and as a principle that should govern the relations between States, particularly in regard to preserving the peace and making the necessary progress towards general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

The Millennium Declaration, adopted by the Heads of State and Government on 8 September 2000, reiterated that the responsibility for managing threats to international peace and security must be shared among the nations of the world and should be exercised multilaterally. In this respect, the United Nations, as the most universal and representative organization in the world, should play a central role.

Unfortunately, the expectations for peace, stability and collaboration that the creation of the United Nations awakened throughout the world are still a long way from being a reality.

Following the end of the so-called "cold war", a unipolar world has emerged in which a single super-Power has the military capacity to dominate the international scene. This has resulted in a situation in which the prevailing characteristics are the hegemony of this single superpower, direct or veiled interventionism under the cloak of multilateral actions, insecurity for the smallest and weakest countries, egoism as a behavioural standard in international relations, and also an attempt to disregard fundamental principles of international law such as sovereign equality among States, national sovereignty, self-determination of the peoples, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, refraining from the threat or use of force in international relations, and peaceful settlement of disputes, all basic founding principles of the United Nations.

The continuous erosion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation resulting from the unilateral actions and attitudes of the world's super-Power, often with the silent complicity of its principal allies in the northern hemisphere, is of great concern. The current situation in the area of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation clearly reflects the imposed crisis of multilateralism at the global level.

There are numerous specific examples of the steps taken by the world's principal military Power to erode the collective security system embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, attempting to replace it by policies that violate its letter and spirit and would have the effect of establishing the "law of the jungle". To name but a few:

- The unilateral attack on Iraq in 2003 and the subsequent occupation of this country, totally disregarding the United Nations and flagrantly violating its Charter and basic principles of international law.

- The United States' decision to unilaterally abandon the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems in 2002 and start preparing for the deployment of a new national anti-missile defence system, which has very negative implications in the area of disarmament and arms control and represents an unfortunate step backwards in efforts to make progress towards nuclear disarmament.

- The development of new types of nuclear weapons and the existence of strategic defence policies based increasingly on the possession and use of this type of weapon, such as the so-called United States Revised Nuclear Posture or the Strategic Concept of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which contemplates new circumstances for the use of nuclear weapons, including expanding the scope of the use or threat of the use of force. Cuba considers that military policies based on the possession of nuclear weapons are unsustainable and unacceptable because of the threat they pose to international peace and security.

- The opposition to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), on the part of the current United States Administration which went so far as to declare that the signature of this international instrument by the United States during President Clinton's mandate was null and void. This position rules out any possibility of CTBT entering into force in the near future, because the United States is one of the 44 States that must ratify the Treaty for it to enter into force.

- The obstruction of the negotiations to conclude a legally binding international instrument to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention, in August 2001.

- The destabilizing process unleashed within the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in the spring of 2002, using financial blackmail to ensure that the Director General of the Organization at the time, the Brazilian, Mauricio Bustani, would be unable to continue exercising his mandate. It is unacceptable that a country, however powerful, can manipulate at will and in response to narrow national interests, who may or may not occupy the top posts in an international organization.

- The attempts to impose non-transparent, selective mechanisms, outside the United Nations and international treaties, to combat international terrorism, including mechanisms linked to the use of weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems, or related materials. In this respect, the so-called Proliferation Security Initiative erodes the international unity that should exist with regard to non-proliferation and the campaign against terrorism and, in practice, attempts to supplant the role of the United Nations and the existing international treaties and intergovernmental organizations in the area of disarmament and arms control. The conception and application of this Initiative violates the fundamental principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and embodied in international law, such as non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, sovereign equality of all States and refraining from the use or threat of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State. Likewise, it violates basic provisions of several international treaties such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

- The obstructionist position during the 2001 United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which prevented the inclusion in the Programme of Action adopted during the Conference of key proposals to halt the increase of this scourge.

- The lack of political will to allow progress in the work of the Disarmament Conference, the only multilateral organ mandated by the international community to negotiate legally binding international instruments in the area of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. For seven years, the United States has opposed the start of negotiations on nuclear disarmament and on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, thus impeding the necessary consensus for the Disarmament Conference to adopt a complete and balanced programme of work that would reflect the interests and priorities of its member States and of the international community as a whole.

- The total obstruction of negotiations during the seventh Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), in May 2005, preventing the adoption of substantive documents designed to promote and attain the goal of nuclear disarmament. The principal nuclear Power categorically refuses to acknowledge the primordial responsibility of the nuclear Powers to comply with article VI of NPT, and disregards undertakings made at previous Review Conferences, particularly the 13 practical steps to advance towards achieving nuclear disarmament agreed upon in 2000.

- More recently, the categorical opposition to the inclusion in the final document adopted by the Heads of State and Government during the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly of a section on the subject of disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects. The United States, disregarding the insistent appeals of the international community, prevented any agreement on this important subject, showing once again its unilateralist vocation and the negligible worth it accords to multilateralism and multilateral solutions in the area of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation.

Cuba deeply regrets and rejects the attempts by some countries, principally the Power with greatest military might, to diminish or sidestep the importance of multilateralism in international relations, including the area of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. In this regard, Cuba considers that General Assembly resolution 59/69 entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation", which reaffirms multilateralism as the core principle in negotiations in this area with a view to maintaining and strengthening universal norms and enlarging their scope, is entirely in force and pertinent.

Preventing unilateralism from taking hold and eroding the role of the United Nations is a collective responsibility and begins with such elementary actions as guaranteeing the adequate functioning, resources and time for meetings of the bodies or forums that constitute the multilateral machinery in the area of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation.

The First Committee of the General Assembly should be given the necessary time to carry out its important work, and the States Members should demonstrate the indispensable political will to comply with the resolutions and decisions that are adopted.

The United Nations Disarmament Commission, the only universal deliberative body specializing in matters of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, should cease to be a formal forum and return to its important role within the multilateral system by proposing guidelines that allow for progress towards achieving tangible results in the area of disarmament.

The Disarmament Conference should be allowed to fulfil its mandate to negotiate legally binding international instruments concerning disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, particularly with regard to nuclear disarmament, the international community's first priority. To this end, the political will of its member States, especially the principal nuclear Power, is fundamental.

Cuba will continue to support and participate directly in the principal multilateral instruments and international organizations in the area of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. They have non-discriminatory verification mechanisms and are designed to promote ongoing consultation and cooperation among the parties in order to settle disputes, facilitate compliance with obligations and discourage recourse to unilateral measures that run counter to the principles of international law and the United Nations Charter.

Cuba will continue to defend its ideals of preserving the peace, reaffirming multilateralism and strengthening international cooperation. During the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, Cuba will again support the resolution on promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation presented by the Non-Aligned Movement and hopes that it will receive the support of the vast majority of Member States.

Jordan

[Original: Arabic]
[7 July 2005]

1. Jordan supports the continuation of all international and regional efforts to promote multilateralism in disarmament and non-proliferation and urges the adoption of measures and procedures to remove prohibited weapons from circulation and dispose of them, and to concentrate on economic development and the promotion of peace under the auspices of the United Nations. Jordan also affirms that a political will and a sincere commitment by all parties involved are necessary in order to achieve peace and stability in the world, as a guarantee of lasting and comprehensive peace.

2. The phenomenon of instability resulting from conflicts in the Middle East region calls for intensive cooperation and the adoption of transparent and comprehensive regional and international measures among all States of the region. In recent decades, Jordan has adopted clear policies that have defined its position with respect to disarmament, thereby underlining its support for all the initiatives and efforts in that field in the various national, regional and international forums. Jordan considers that the question of disarmament cannot be addressed as an isolated issue or as one to be handled by individual States; the situation will become increasingly dangerous unless it is addressed by serious and effective regional and international efforts to achieve disarmament and to strengthen the concept of multilateralism.

3. In the field of strengthening multilateralism in disarmament and non-proliferation, Jordan has ratified all the international conventions and treaties relating to weapons of mass destruction, the most important of which are as follows:

(a) Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT);

(b) Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT);

(c) Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BWC);

(d) Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC);

(e) Jordan has supported all initiatives aimed at the establishment of a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction.

4. In that context, Jordan is making diligent efforts to make the Middle East region a zone free of weapons of mass destruction through its effective participation in the technical committee endorsed by the Arab Ministers for Foreign Affairs at their one hundred and first session to prepare a project to make the Middle East region a zone free of weapons of mass destruction. Jordan's ratification of the conventions and treaties on weapons of mass destruction and its active and positive role in the organizations established for that purpose are clear evidence of Jordan's concern for and commitment to international instruments to strengthen security, peace and stability throughout the world.

5. Jordan's position with regard to that commitment can be summarized as follows:

(a) Encouraging the elimination of the nuclear threat from the Middle East region and commitment to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and to making the region free of all weapons of mass destruction;

(b) Proposing practical measures to reduce tension, build confidence and control the arms race in the region in all its forms under the auspices of the United Nations;

(c) Accession by all States of the region to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and placing all nuclear installations in the region under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency;

(d) Strengthening intelligence cooperation and confidence-building measures between the Middle East region and the arms-exporting States of the world;

(e) Refraining from any action involving violations of treaties or conventions, or of State sovereignty.